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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Transportation Committee

**From:** CMAP Staff

Date: September 7, 2012

**Re:** Community Planning Program Grants

This memo describes recommendations for projects to be funded through the Community Planning program grants. Applications were received on August 1 for both the Community Planning program and the Local Technical Assistance program, which primarily provides staff assistance. Under the Community Planning program, northeastern Illinois communities may receive grant funds for planning initiatives that address the integration of land use and transportation. The Transportation Committee is asked to consider recommending approval of the Community Planning program grants to the MPO Policy Committee, which will consider approval at their meeting on October 10.

## Recommended projects

The preliminary staff recommendation is to fund 7 of the 13 projects that submitted Community Planning program applications. These are:

Sponsor	Project
Calumet City	Comprehensive Plan
Chicago DHED	Garfield Park Kedzie Avenue Corridor Plan
Evanston	Bicycle Plan Update
Niles*	Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*
North Aurora	Comprehensive Plan Update
NWMC	Des Plaines River Corridor Improvement Plan
Prospect Heights	Comprehensive Plan

<sup>\*</sup> The Niles project will be linked with a project that CMAP has already committed to undertake involving planning for Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) service on Milwaukee Avenue; these projects will be joined into a single project rather than pursuing them separately.

These seven projects were consistent with CMAP's scoring criteria for the program, which focused on consistency with the Livable Communities and Regional Mobility recommendations of GO TO 2040. Each supports CMAP's goals of linking land use and transportation and providing a multimodal transportation system, and each project demonstrates adequate

amounts of public participation and intergovernmental coordination. The evaluation criteria were also listed in the application form (see <u>link</u> to the 2013 program application form).

## Projects not recommended for funding

Two applicants that submitted Community Planning program applications also submitted the same project to the LTA program, and were judged to be more suitable for consideration in the LTA program due to the nature of the projects as well as the eligibility requirements, which are limited to local units of government. These projects were submitted by the NAACP (for a community garden on Chicago's south side) and UIC (for a nonmotorized transportation plan) and both are still being evaluated for inclusion in the LTA program. Neither of these projects will receive Community Planning program funds.

Four projects were reviewed for inclusion in the Community Planning program but were determined to be lower priorities. These include:

- Chicago Back of the Yards Corridor Plan. Chicago DHED also submitted a corridor plan for the Back of the Yards neighborhood, in addition to their Garfield Park application. Both projects are good fits for the Community Planning program, but DHED indicated that their priority was the Garfield Park project. In order to provide opportunities to additional municipalities, the Back of the Yards project is not recommended for funding, although DHED should consider resubmitting it next year.
- Garfield Ridge Community Plan. CDOT requested funding for a land use plan in the Garfield Ridge neighborhood, south of Midway Airport, to examine the land use impacts of a proposed underpass involving Central Avenue and the BRC freight line. The project is primarily outside of the City of Chicago in the communities of Bedford Park and Burbank, but the application did not demonstrate coordination with these neighboring municipalities.
- Glenwood Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Plan. The community recently completed a TOD plan funded by the RTA. Also, the transit elements of the application are largely centered around the SouthEast Service, which is an unconstrained capital project; CMAP's priority is investment in the existing transit system.
- Midlothian Streetscape and Implementation Plan. Midlothian requested funding to
  advance previous planning efforts that have been funded by the RTA. However, it does
  not appear that further planning work in the community is necessary, but rather that the
  recommendations of previous plans should be implemented. This requires engineering
  and capital investment, rather than additional planning.

The total cost of the projects recommended for funding is estimated at approximately \$600,000. This leaves approximately \$250,000 unexpended from the FY 13 budget for grants for local projects. Staff recommends that this funding be reserved and allocated to suitable LTA projects as the year progresses and projects become more fully scoped. Any project funded in this way will have significant transportation components and be eligible for UWP funds.

**Action Requested:** The Transportation committee is asked to recommend Policy Committee approval of the projects recommended above.